

Hot Topics

Abuse

Leader Guide

Theme: Abuse is not acceptable in any situation but God gives us hope for restoration and forgiveness.

Note to Leader: This could be a very sensitive topic for some girls who may be struggling with an issue right now or are still dealing with pain from the past. Use your discretion as you proceed with the following questions and direct the conversation. If a girl in your group approaches you with a personal story, remember that you are not a counselor. Have a plan to include parents and direct a girl to professional assistance.

Unfortunately, abuse is not a new phenomenon—it's been around for a long time and is even documented in the Bible.

Joseph was one of twelve brothers. One day he went out to find his brothers who, at the time, were jealous of Joseph. He was their father's favorite child, and he had two dreams that indicated that someday his brothers would bow to him. They hated him.

Use the following Scriptures in your discussion.

Read Genesis 37:19–28.

- How was Joseph mistreated?
- What do you think Joseph was feeling as he was emotionally and physically abused by his own brothers?
- What did Joseph do to deserve being treated that way?

Read Genesis 37:31–36.

- How did Joseph's brothers try to cover up what they had done to him? Did it work?
- Have you been in a situation where someone was hurt and the others involved tried to cover it up?
- What did you do? If you were Joseph, what would you want someone to do?

A lot of people can relate to the story of Joseph—either they were betrayed by someone close to them, they were taken out of a good situation and thrown into a bad situation, or they experienced the emotional and physical abuse and neglect that Joseph endured.

Let's look at another instance of abuse.

Read 2 Samuel 13:1-4.

- What is Amnon experiencing here?
- What can happen when we entertain certain thoughts?



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Too often our culture mistakes lust for love. Look up the word lust in the dictionary.

Read 2 Samuel 13:5.

- What advice is Jonadab giving Amnon? Put this scenario into a present-day context
- What would this situation be like if it happened today?
- Can you think of someone that has given you bad advice? What did you do with that advice?

Read the following verses about God's healing and restoration:

Psalms 147:3; 34:17-18; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Read the following verses about forgiving others:

Matthew 6:14,15; Luke 6:35,36; Ephesians 4:32

Take some time to write a letter to Jesus. Talk to Him about whatever is on your heart.

Prayer: Pray with the girls to speak up if there is abuse in their life and for them to have the courage to take the next step to get the help they need. Then pray for everyone to remember there is hope for restoration with the past if they walk in forgiveness with God's help.

Additional Resources:

Teenage Girls: Exploring Issues Adolescent Girls Face and Strategies to Help Them by Ginny Olson.
Help! My Kids Are Hurting: A Survival Guide to Working with Students in Pain by Marv Penner.

For more topical Bible studies for teen girls, visit www.myhealthychurch.com/teengirls

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For Student

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